

REMARKS:

This is in response to the Office Action that was mailed on June 9, 2003. Independent claim 1 is amended to recite a limitation from original claim 3. Dependent claim 3 is accordingly amended to delete that limitation. New claim 5 is based upon disclosure in lines 1-19 on page 7 of the specification. No new matter has been introduced. Claims 1-5 are in the case.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Nitto. The rejection is clearly not applicable to the claims in their present form.

The Examiner appears to take the position that the method of claim 2 of the Nitto reference may be one embodiment of the method for producing the bonded article of Nitto claim 1. However, the method of Nitto claim 2 is not simply one embodiment but is the only method described in the Nitto reference.

This is clear from the description on page 2, lower left column, lines 2-12 of the Japanese publication, which corresponds to page 4, lines 1-11 of the English translation of the Nitto reference. Unfortunately, the first and second lines of page 4 of the translation are not quite correctly translated. The correct translation of the lines is as follows:

Furthermore, the method for manufacturing the bonded article of a fluorine-containing resin of the present invention is characterized by the following facts: ---.

Thus, the Nitto reference clearly teaches that the article of claim 1 is produced by the method of claim 2, and that the bonded article must use "a fluorine-containing resin powder having thermal fusing ability". Moreover, no part of the Nitto reference teaches or suggests manufacturing of the bonded

article without the use of a fluorine-containing resin powder having thermal fusion ability.

The Nitto reference describes a coefficient of thermal shrinkage (thermal shrinkage rate) of "100 to 400%". See page 4, lines 24-25 of the translation. In Nitto's examples, a medium-diameter tubular body had a thermal shrinkage rate of 220% and a large-diameter tubular body had a thermal shrinkage rate of 160%. In contrast, the present claims require among other things that "each premolded part has a coefficient of thermal shrinkage in the range between 0.2 and 10%." Accordingly, the premolded part used in the present invention is clearly distinguished from the tubular bodies of the Nitto reference.

Conclusion

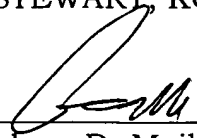
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Richard Gallagher (Reg. No. 28,781) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By


Andrew D. Meikle, #32,868


ADM/RG:gml

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000